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Headly Benjamin

THE
THOUGHTS
OF AN
Honest Tory,
UPON THE
Present Proceedings
OF THAT
PARTY.

In a Letter to a Friend in Town.

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I*T is hoped, that the Gentleman who wrote this Letter, will not take it amiss that its now Published by one, into whose Hands it came : Since it will be a Credit to his own Party to have it appear, that there is yet left some Sense of Honour and Honesty amongst them. And the Reader will not wonder that he speaks so sincerely, and plainly, when he considers that it was written in confidence, and in his private Correspondence with a very particular Friend.*

Dict. - C. J.
H. J.
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(I)

THE
THOUGHTS
OF AN
Honest TORY, &c.

In a Letter to a Friend in Town.

YOU know, my Friend, that I take a great deal of Pleasure in communicating my Thoughts to You, especially when they are such as lie heavy upon my Mind. I cannot forbear giving my self this Relief, and you are always so kind as to esteem it the part of Friendship to bear with me in it. I need not tell you that my Sentiments in Matters relating both to Church and State, have been ever conformable to your own. The same Fears, the same Hopes, the same Joys, the same Sorrows, have been hitherto entertained by us both. But I know not how it is : I cannot, by any means, enter into the measures of your last Letter ; nor by any means receive that Satisfaction from some Appearances, which you seem to have receiv'd. Whether it be that

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your closer Conversation with some Persons of refined Politicks in Town, hath a little alter'd your Soul from that regard to *Right* and *Just*, which seem'd once inflexibly to possess it ; or that the Quiet and Composure of my Country Seat gives me more leisure and inclination to melancholy Reflections ; or what the Reason is, I am not able to say.

The Day is our own, you tell me ; *We are just now coming into play again. The Credit of the Ministry is gone : the Reputation of the Whigs sunk to nothing : There are those who have satisfied Her Majesty, that We are Her true Friends ; that the House of Commons must be dissolved ; a Total Alteration made : and the like.* How this would once have rejoiced my Heart, I need not tell you. But I confess, a walk or two in my Garden, and a Thought or two upon the Matter, hath made me at present entertain but too melancholy Apprehensions concerning this piece of News. If you will give me leave to speak my Mind freely, as I used to do, I will own to you that I am quite sick at the review of the Methods our Friends have used to gain this happy Prospect, and at the Consequences, which at this time present themselves to my Thoughts. Honour obtain'd by dishonourable Means, must end in Dishonour : And Honour obtain'd by shaking the *Publick Happiness*, is only a more visible Disgrace. These are my Maxims which recur perpetually to my Mind at this time.

A little *Patience* might have made way for our Friends, without that load of *Infamy* which must now stick to our Cause, till it hath eaten into it, and consumed it. You and others, I find, fondly imagine, that the late *Trial*, and our Management

ment upon it, have laid the Foundation of our Reign. But I fear, my Friend, that when the whole Matter comes to be sedately considered, both the *Trial*, and our *Management*, and the *Man* who was the occasion of all, will hang like a *Millstone* about the *Neck* of our *Cause*, till it is sunk lower than ever it hath yet been. I know several considering Persons in our Parts, who were a little wavering before, now entirely confirm'd that the *Tories* care not if the Affairs of *Europe* be entirely confounded, so their personal Ends be answered; and that no Methods are too bad for them to encourage and make use of. And between Friends, a little more of the like Management cannot but alienate my self from a Cause which I have hitherto been heartily engaged in. You know that tho' I am for the *Church*, I am for *Religion* too; and tho' I join with the *Tories*, yet I took *Oaths* with a sincere design of being faithful to them: and therefore you will not wonder if I look with grief upon some Proceedings.

What defence shall we make for raising a *Mob*, upon the foremention'd occasion, where-ever we could? It cannot be palliated, It cannot be denied. To cast it now upon the *other Party*, is only adding to the Wickedness: And to do it, as some of our Friends do, even whilst themselves are boasting of having the *Mob* against the *Whigs*, is too gross and bare-faced a Contradiction. I have, to my grief, heard several glorying in it: and I am my self witness, that no care was on our side taken to suppress it; but a great deal to hinder the punishment of any who were concerned in it. If ever there can be such a thing as *Rebellion* against *Queen*, *Lords*, and *Commons*; this may justly be so accounted. And this is our
Glory,

Glory, which ought to be our *Shame* ! What shall we say to the *Insults* made upon the Sentence pass'd, by *Bonfires*, *Illuminations*, *Riotous Assemblies*, encouraged, or connived at amongst us universally ? When it is asked, Are these the Men who are crying out upon *others* as the *Promoters* of *Rebellion* ? Are these the *Passive*, the *Submissive* Disciples of the *Cross* ? What shall be answer'd to the *Adversaries* ? You know what my Opinion hath always been of the other side : but I must own, that my Reading will not furnish me with a *Parallel*, nor can I say that they have ever, upon so slight an occasion, (a Man judicially call'd to account) shewn so turbulent and seditious a Spirit. And put the *Case* that at this time, they had been as ready to return Injuries, as others to offer them, and as desirous of fomenting Disturbances, as we have usually thought them, what must have been the *Event* but something terrible and bloody ? something which I cannot, without Horror, think of ? But it seems our Methods, which I used to think open, honest, and generous, must now be wholly alter'd. Nothing is *bad*, so it be for a *good End* : Nothing to be balk'd that can serve a Purpose. Nor hath our great Management stop'd at these *Tumults*, and *Insults* upon the whole *Legislature*, by which we have shewn our value to our *Constitution*. If all the *Profelytes* we have gain'd, and all the *Ignorant Men* and *Women*, we have spirited up for us, on this occasion, by *Lies*, and *Calumnies* ; by personal undeserved *Praises*, and undeserved *Abuses*, were taken away, I fear the remainder would be very inconsiderable. The *Man*, who is now, it seems, made our *Champion*, we both agree, is not more hated by one side, than He is heartily despised by the other. For my own part,

part, I have heard such a Character of Him, that I never desire to have to do with Him. Our Friends, indeed, pay him, as they would do a *Fidler*, that plays the *Tune* that is call'd for, and helps forward a *Country-Dance* : and they seem inwardly to value him as much as they do such a one. You know in the *House of Commons*, they did not think fit to say one Word in his behalf, or in the behalf of his *Sermon*. In the *House of Lords*, it was pleaded by them, that the *Sermon* was incoherent *Nonsense*, and He that could preach it, little better than mad ; and this was thought the best that it was proper to say for Him. All the World knows, He was not to be trusted with the management of his own *Cause* ; or with any thing but the speaking such Words, as were put into his Mouth. And yet to this Man we must wisely tack our Fortunes. The *Church of England* : nay, the whole *Church of Christ*, *Christianity* it self must be made dependent upon his Fate. His *Pictures*, His *Cause*, must be made our *Tools*. Who would not envy us such honourable Instruments ? He is now, I hear, in his Progress, propagating his *Gospel*, making his Triumphant Entries into our Cities, receiving the obsequious Homage of adoring Crowds, and dispensing his Blessings amongst them. I suppose, quickly we shall have a *Map* of our *Apostles Travels*, as there are of the others ; and *Proposals* for setting up his *Statues* in all *Market-Places* ; and his *Picture* in all *Parish Churches*. Hath He not a Friend in the World left to recall him, for his own Sake ? Or, hath not our *Party* one left to stop his *Career*, before he grows too *Ridiculous*, even to be a *Tool* any longer ? And is all our *Argument*, and *Reason*, dwindled into this ? Have we nothing to say for our selves but by such a Mouth, and such a pre-

vailing Figure ? In my Conscience, I think it a Season for us to mourn, instead of rejoicing, if this be so. The *Man* himself will sink us in time.

And then, what shall we say of that numerous train of *Lies* and *Calumnies*, which our *Agents*, with Applause, scatter abroad through the whole *Country*; especially a *News-writer*, *J. D--r*, whom, however some may think of him, I cannot but esteem the greatest Infamy belonging to our Party. Justice is due to all Men. You may remember what a bare-fac'd Lie He told us about Dr. *West's* Sermon on the 30th of *January*: what Representations He hath made of *Matters* since, which we knew to be otherwise: and just now (what toucheth my Temper as tenderly as any thing) He hath been insulting Mr. *Dolben's* Death, to make *God's* Hand in a particular manner upon him; and confidently attributed that to Him, which I since know from those who attended Him on his Death-bed, to be a *notorious Falshood*. Numberless are the Instances of this nature: So many of late, that I have had a Suspicion these six Months, that the *Whigs* give him a *Penion* to ruin us, under pretence of serving us, by his scandalous Lies, and Calumnies.

Our *Addresses*, I own, make as deep an impression of melancholy upon my mind. Shall I, because I differ from Men in other things, presently go and represent to Her Majesty, and insinuate that *they* are *Republicans*, whom I know in my Conscience to be otherwise; that *they* are not *Churchmen*, whom I know to be so; or that they have designs, which I cannot prove ever to have entred into their Heads? and shall I so far forget my self, as to declare that *Right* to be the *best Right*, which I my self have *abjured* for the future? All the *Posts* and
Offices,

Offices, in all the Kingdoms of this World, are not worthy of one such instance of *Post-play*. I cannot forbear doing justice to all, and acting the part of a generous Enemy, as well as an honest Man. I ask'd one great Man, who brought me an *Address* to sign, whether he could name one single person of any remark among the *Whigs*, who desires our present *Constitution* may be chang'd into a *Republick*; whether as great Friends as any we have, had not openly own'd *Passive Obedience*, to be a *limited Duty*; whether that which we our selves own to be true, should be made matter of reproach to others; whether our Cause could not be better supported without *Lies* and *Calumnies*, and the like. I found he could name no such *Republican*: and as for the *Doctrine* of *Non-resistance*, he frankly own'd between Friends, that he believ'd all were of a mind about it, and that none would practice it in *Cases* of *Extremity*. He added, that by *Hereditary Right*, he for his part mean't no more than *Hereditary Right*, according to that *All* which excludes *Papists*, and consequently destroys *Hereditary Right*: but that these *Terms* would serve as well as any in the World to break another Interest, and to keep up a *distinction* where there was no *difference*. I could not forbear answering him, that I detested *Popish Principles*; and detested *Republican Principles*: But at this time found my *Detestation* to rise highest against those *false Friends*, who were now bringing an indelible disgrace upon a good Cause, by *Jesuitical*, and *Diabolical* methods. He seem'd to pity my *Honesty*; and so took leave. As soon as he was gone, *Good God!* thought I, to what a height shall we come at last, and where will such proceedings end? Our Cause may be carried indeed

indeed for the present by such methods : But what *Cause* can long subsist by them? If we could not hold it, when we came regularly, and by the voluntary favour of our *Princesses*, into the *Posts* and *Trusts* of the Nation; how shall we be able to hold it, when we come to them under a burthen of such *Infamy* and *Disbonour*, as will one day or other appear in due Light, to the generality of the Nation?

And, my Friend, the circumstance of time should methinks strike some little concern into every *British Heart*. Think to what a *Crisis* things are coming abroad; the great affair of Peace now on Foot; a *General* fighting our Battles, in whom the *Allies* have an entire confidence; the *Summer* almost half spent; the *Pretender* watching the lucky opportunity: At home, think of a Nation of Men, mutually provoking, and provoked by, one another; hardly, at best, abstaining at this time from open quarrels. Is this a time for such a Total Alteration, as must shake the confidence of Friends, and inspire the Enemy with Hopes? Is this the Season for an entire change of Hands, when *publick Credit* must be sunk into nothing, before the rest of *Europe* can have time to know whom they are to depend upon, and the people at home whom they are to trust? Is this a day for a *New General*, or to disgust the *Old*, when he is happily in the favour of all abroad, and in the midst of the Execution of glorious Projects? Or is this a time for a new choice of a House of *Commons*, when such an opportunity is more likely than ever to be improved by our *common Enemies* into a *civil War* amongst our selves? I should upon other Terms, have been as glad as any Man of such Alterations: But not upon the hard Terms of

of hazarding a total Ruin of us all together ; of endangering the whole Confederacy ; of forcing upon *Europe* a dishonourable Peace, and of laying open our selves to the greatest Heats and Quarrels. As much as I have ever opposed the *Whigs*, and as heartily as I have ever espoused another Interest, I profess I would not, for all the World, be the Man who should at this time bring about so terrible and hazardous *Alterations* : Which can hardly, without a miracle, be unattended with the most fatal consequences, both *Abroad*, and at *Home*. Abroad, we cannot our selves deny it, the diffidence and distrust upon an entire change here, must be as great as, we know, the confidence and security to be at present : And so the sole *End* of a twenty Years War, all at once disappointed, even when it is come within view of a Conclusion. At *Home*, such threatnings have been given out, and such insults made, that I dread to think, lest the *field* of *Election* should become a *field* of *Battle*. This however, I cannot help foreboding, that if there be any one happy consequence of such *changes* at this time, it must be to the *common Enemy* ; if any miserable, it must be to our *native Country*.

Alas ! Whither are we running so hastily ? And what is the *Spirit* which we have been raising ? We see the beginnings of these things ; but we see not the end. Would it not make a Man of sober Sense, Heart-sick, to hear what is vented, (by means of our Encouragement, and our protection, *forsooth*) from those *Pulpits* in which our *Friends* do so superabundantly at this time *Triumph* ! The *young Man*, just come from the *University* ; and the *old Man* that hath been long in the World ; (those I mean, that are called
of

humbling our selves for the Madness of *Lunaticks*, or the Folly of those whom no body regards, and few so much as knew of, before We, out of our Christian Compassion, disclosed the Infernal Scene; instead of this, I say, why should we not publickly repent in Dust and Ashes for that Scene of *Villany*, and *Scandal*, which is working on our side, and which I cannot say, we desire so much as to seem to discourage. And for the time to come, let us dare to be honest; if we think fit to enter the Lists, let us combat our Neighbours upon equal Terms, and not be so dishonourable as to fight them with Weapons that make us an Overmatch for all that have any degree of Love to their Country, or of *Modesty*, or of *Humanity*, left. *I am, &c.*

Postscript.

I have just now receiv'd the Impartial Account of the Proceedings in the last Sessions, &c. and have consider'd it enough to tell you, that I am still more confirm'd in what I have been lamenting. The very Title-page is Knavery; and the Conclusion as plainly points to a second Restoration, as any one could well dare to do, before it comes to pass. The Tenderness express'd, p. 11. to Papists and Non-jurors, as if it was unreasonable to look upon them as Enemies ready to disturb our Government, bath an appearance in it, shocking to every honest Man who hath taken the Oaths: And the ridiculous Contradiction of boasting of the Zeal of the Mob, against those whom our Friends have nick-nam'd Republicans, and yet attempting to throw the scandal of the Tumults upon those very persons who are so nick-named, will remain upon record, as great a Testimony of Understanding, as the former is of Honesty. I am told we are indebted to a celebrated Patron of our Cause for this Account. If this be true, so much the worse; so much the greater load of Scandal upon us. I pass by multitude of other points which, I am sorry to say, are utterly unjustifiable. Integrity and Honour seem to be entirely forgotten. God help a Cause that is supported by such Methods! Adieu.